



**world summit
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THE CONTRIBUTION OF NEW INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES TO GOOD GOVERNANCE, THE IMPROVEMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF GLOBALISATION

*Resolution adopted by acclamation by the 109th IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 3 October 2003)*

The 109th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Hoping that the new information and communication technologies (NICTs) will help to build a more peaceful, more prosperous and fairer world based on global public goods in all their diversity,

Convinced that the NICTs can bring about significant political, economic and social changes that will reduce distances and generate new cultures and markets, although they give rise to concerns as well as hopes,

Also convinced that the NICTs play an increasingly important role in socio-cultural, economic and political development in an era of globalisation,

Mindful that the NICTs facilitate the sharing of knowledge among peoples,

Fully supporting the forthcoming World Summit on the Information Society, as a unique opportunity to foster the global consensus and commitment required to harness the power of the NICTs to advance human development,

Mindful that the NICTs as such are not the solution to the world's problems but rather tools, mechanisms and opportunities that require the political will of society and cooperation among States in order to ensure that they serve the goals pursued at the national and international level,

Emphasising the many financial, economic and social restrictions and barriers hindering the use of the NICTs in developing societies, including inadequate financial resources to cover the huge investments needed in this field, a shortage of managers and skilled personnel, weak demand for such services due to limited purchasing power and low incomes, and the rising costs of the services provided by the NICTs,

Recalling that good governance requires, within each country and at the international level, an ethic for the management of the State and its resources based on principles and norms that include requirements of transparency, accountability, communication, respect for the rule of law, an independent judiciary and a liberal and democratic State that protects human rights, guarantees clear rules for the free play of market forces and favours the unfettered development of civil society in all its cultural, economic, societal and political dimensions, enabling it to exercise a democratic power of initiative and oversight,

Underscoring that traditional means of communication, transparency and accountability, no matter how indispensable, can be enhanced by the NICTs to further good management of governance,

Recalling that the NICTs facilitate the defence and promotion of human rights and gender equality,

Asserting that without an appropriate public policy, the NICTs cannot be a factor of shared progress,

Noting that the majority of the developing countries have lagged behind the North in the economic and social field, *fearing* that the extremely rapid development of the NICTs may further widen the digital divide between industrialised and developing countries, and *recognising* the need to narrow the gap,

Placing great importance on mutual cooperation between industrialised and developing countries for further promotion of the NICTs on a worldwide basis,

Acknowledging that the NICTs can enhance but do not obviate the duty of national parliaments to take responsibility for good governance and parliamentary democracy in their own countries,

Mindful that if citizens are to fulfil their duties and assert their rights, they must be able to access and utilise information,

Aware that the NICTs can be a very useful tool for consolidating and renewing parliamentary democracy by allowing better participation by all citizens,

Noting that the NICTs make it easier to manage and participate in the globalisation process, especially as far as the international organisations are concerned,

Hoping that the NICTs will be used for development, and *noting* the importance of the NICTs as an integral part of efforts to combat poverty and discrimination and achieve the Millennium Goals,

Recalling that the NICTs advance education and training which are essential for development and gender equality,

Mindful that each State has a duty to ensure that the NICTs are acquired and utilised properly,

Regretting that the NICTs have to a large extent been used for so-called spam mail and destructive purposes involving anti-democratic messages and degrading pornographic content and including unregulated weapons trading,

1. *Calls on* parliaments to support the successful completion of the World Summit on the Information Society and to take the necessary steps to ensure that their representatives are included in the national delegations to the Summit;
2. *Calls on* parliaments and their members to make full use of the NICTs:
 - to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of their activities and to better connect with the electorate;
 - to expand inter-parliamentary relationships and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels, thus enhancing parliamentary democracy and diplomacy;
3. *Urges* the establishment of appropriate aid mechanisms, including an NICT observatory for Africa and other disadvantaged regions, and *recommends* the establishment of a network of correspondents among IPU Member parliaments;

4. *Recommends* that each parliament put in place the necessary structures to follow up and monitor annually the development of e-government in its country so as to guarantee its transparency for citizens and democracy;
5. *Urges* governments to take the necessary steps to ensure free community access to those NICTs that guarantee good governance;
6. *Calls on* the international community to seek further means of closing the South's NICT gap;
7. *Invites* the international community to promote NICT training for managers and technicians from the South;
8. *Calls on* international organisations and NGOs to promote knowledge sharing in this area and the establishment of NICT networks, in cooperation with partners from both the South and the North;
9. *Urges* governments to use the NICTs to broaden distance education, which can reach groups of people that otherwise would not have access to education;
10. *Draws* governments' attention to the need to strengthen the personal protection and security of the users of the NICTs and to strive for legislation on international range;
11. *Urges* governments to find ways to limit the use of spam mail and the use of the NICTs for destructive purposes;
12. *Supports* all NICT-related initiatives aimed at respecting and promoting linguistic and cultural diversity;
13. *Calls for* the introduction of national and regional policies that incorporate the development of information and communication infrastructures and existing resources;
14. *Calls on* the international community to promote the use of the NICTs to enhance civic involvement in public decision-making;
15. *Also calls on* governments to see to it that the NICTs are acquired and used properly with a view to guaranteeing good governance and avoiding all forms of discrimination;
16. *Encourages* States to put in place national strategies centred on education, including basic and digital literacy, for the implementation of the information society;
17. *Calls for* strengthened national efforts and international cooperation in order to prevent and combat the use of the NICTs for criminal and terrorist ends;
18. *Encourages* national policies and international action aimed at ensuring that the NICTs serve gender equality and the empowerment of women;
19. *Invites* parliaments to take legislative action with the aim of providing an environment conducive to the dissemination, development and secure use of the NICTs;
20. *Reaffirms* the principle of freedom of expression in cyberspace, with the restrictions required by the fight against terrorism, pornography, trafficking in human beings, organised crime, racism, revisionism and discrimination;
21. *Stresses* the need to facilitate Internet hook-ups by breaking the monopoly of the telephone companies and promoting cheaper alternative solutions;

22. *Considers* that the new technologies must help to integrate generations and social groups;
23. *Stresses* that the IPU can contribute to strengthening North-South and South-South cooperation in the NICT field via appropriate mechanisms;
24. *Urges* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to create a climate conducive to the advent of the information society by:
 - Encouraging the use of the NICTs in the organisation of elections so as to guarantee the democratic process, particularly in the countries of the South;
 - Strengthening the role of parliaments in following up decisions and resolutions relating to the information society by monitoring and implementing commitments made by governments in the NICT field;
 - Encouraging parliaments to commit themselves to knowledge acquisition, consultancy and assistance in the NICT field with a view to consolidating parliamentary democracy;
 - Further helping parliaments from emerging democracies and developing countries to take full advantage of the NICTs, by means of its technical assistance programmes.